

**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
100 MAPLE AVENUE
SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS**

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

Present: Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson; Ms. Erin Boucher, Vice Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary; Ms. Lynsey Heffernan; Ms. Rachel Sharifipour; Mr. Christian Girardi, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Ms. Amy B. Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Ms. Barb Malone, Executive Director of Human Resources; and Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools.

A complete audio/visual recording of this meeting is available on the Shrewsbury Public Schools website.

The meeting was convened by Ms. Fryc at 7:00 pm.

I. Public Participation

None.

II. Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports

None.

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer reported that Major Howard W. Beal Elementary School was designated as one of the Massachusetts School Building Authority's (MSBA) newly designated Model Schools.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:

A. SHS Student Advisory Committee: Report

Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Student Advisory Committee (SAC) student members Siri Ural, Class of 2024, Chair; Noah Csank, Class of 2025; Venkata Duggireddy, Class of 2024; Aanya Gupta, Class of 2024; and Caroline Strickland, Class of 2025, gave the report, and Mr. Andrew Smith, SHS Teacher and Faculty Advisor to the SAC, was in attendance at the meeting. In their report, the students presented information on student life, co-curricular activities, and various events at SHS. They shared student feedback on new start times for 2023-2024 (students are getting more sleep and feel less rushed in the morning), the high school's new phone policy (no phones are allowed in classes and Advisory periods) and the culture of "belonging" (noting the upcoming *This is Us* event for any group) at SHS.

B. SHS Enrollment & Class Size: Report

In their report, SHS Principal Mr. Todd Bazydlo and Assistant Principal for Student Services Ms. Nga Huynh provided: ten-year historical data for overall high school enrollment, average class size by subject, and Counselor caseloads; five-year historical data for average class size by department; details on increased English, Math, and Science co-taught sections; and data by academic hallways to illustrate

pressure on current building capacity. In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Bazydlo advised that enrollment trends by department reflect a combination of factors including student interest/desires and building capacity.

V. Curriculum

A. Literacy Initiative Update: Report

Ms. Clouter's update provided information on: personnel (introducing the district's four Reading Specialists and noting three of the positions were recently added); literacy programs and practices (noting utilization of both word recognition and language comprehension skill practices); aligning support to student needs and using diagnostic tools; new data cycles; Professional Development for staff; and investments and challenges going forward.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Clouter noted the importance of: communication with the parent community (who are viewed as partners in the process) around literacy initiatives and adjusting report cards to reflect the new curriculum, student data collected informing next steps relative to levels of support needed, and coordination with middle level staff. Ms. Clouter further advised that interest in the initiative is reflected in the growth of the Literacy Council from 16 to 33 members, and that feedback on Professional Development offerings has been positive.

VI. Policy

None.

VII. Finance & Operations

A. FY25 Draft Budget Priorities, Guidance, & Calendar: Discussion

Ms. Heffernan (who is a member of the Finance Subcommittee with Ms. Fryc) summarized the priorities in the draft document regarding meeting commitments agreed to in the 2021 Override Statement between the School Committee and Select Board, and noted the importance of being cognizant of the resources available to fund the various Fiscal Year 2025 priorities and determining how to best allocate them to meet needs in the district. Mr. Girardi provided details on the nine assumptions included in the draft and summarized the FY25 Draft Budget Development Calendar being presented. Ms. Heffernan noted uncertainty around some funding sources in the budget that are out of the district's control (e.g. homeless student funding from the state) and advised that dates on the draft calendar for joint meetings with the Select Board were still to be determined. Committee members provided their perspectives in turn and support was expressed for the priorities included in the draft. Dr. Sawyer added that community members would have the opportunity to provide feedback on the drafts presented in advance of a vote by the Committee at their next meeting on November 15.

B. Warehouse Rental Closeout Plan: Vote

Mr. Girardi gave an update to his report at the September 27 School Committee meeting on the district's process of closing out rental space and disposing of unwanted furniture. Mr. Girardi provided information on the public sale of items, donation of furniture to a charitable organization, storage of items at other schools in the district, and procurement of a dumpster for disposal of remaining materials that could not be repurposed. Dr. Sawyer recommended that the Committee vote to authorize the disposal of the remaining items.

On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Ms. Sharifipour, the Committee voted unanimously to authorize the disposal of all remaining School Department items stored in the warehouse located at 220 Barber Avenue, Worcester, MA due to being deemed not useful, in accordance with School Committee Policy 802- Disposal of Used Equipment/ Supplies and in accordance with M.G.L Chapter 30B, Section 15.

VIII. Old Business

None.

IX. New Business

None.

X. Approval of Minutes

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on October 11, 2023, were accepted as distributed.

XI. Executive Session

Ms. Fryc requested a motion to adjourn to Executive Session:

A. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) “[t]o comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements” (“Purpose 7”), Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 22(f), (g) – for the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes; and

B. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(3) “to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect of the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares” (“Purpose 3”) - the Shrewsbury Education Association Units A and/or B, the Shrewsbury Paraprofessional Association, and/or the Cafeteria Workers Association, where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body; and return to Open Session only for the purpose of adjourning for the evening.

On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Ms. Sharifipour, on a roll call vote: Ms. Sharifipour, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Boucher, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes, the School Committee voted to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:27 pm.

XII. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Ms. Boucher, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Ms. Sharifipour, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Boucher, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

SHS Student Advisory Committee Agenda
SHS Class Size Report 2023-2024
SHS Class Size Slide Presentation
Literacy Initiative Report
Literacy Initiative Slide Presentation

Warehouse Rental Closeout Plan Memo
FY25 Draft Budget Priorities & Guidance
FY25 Draft Budget Calendar
Set(s) of minutes as referenced above